

Richmond-Dresden Union Methodist Church  
Pleasant Street  
Richmond  
Sagadahoc County  
Maine

HABS No. ME-155

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PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. ME-155

## RICHMOND-DRESDEN UNION METHODIST CHURCH

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Location: Pleasant Street (west side opposite White St.  
between Main and Church Streets), Richmond,  
Sagadahoc County, Maine.

Present Owner  
and Occupant: Richmond-Dresden Union Methodist Church.

Present Use: Church.

Statement of  
Significance: A characteristic village or rural church of  
traditional form with fine vernacular Gothic  
Revival detail on the exterior.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: The following is an incomplete chain of title to the land on which the structure stands. Reference is the office of the Registrar of Deeds, Sagadahoc County Courthouse, Bath, Maine 04530.  
  
1846 Deed December 1, 1846 recorded February 9, 1847 in Book 25 of the Western District of Lincoln County page 160, Deed reaffirmed June 13, 1855 rerecorded June 29, 1855 in Book 5 of Sagadahoc County page 41  
Samuel F. Blair  
to  
Trustees of the Richmond Village Chapel Society  
  
1857 Deed March 19, 1857 recorded August 24, 1857 in Book 11 page 225  
Trustees of the Richmond Village Chapel Society  
to  
Trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church,  
Richmond Village
2. Date of erection: Built 1846-47.
3. Architect, builder, suppliers etc.: Built by Charles Buker, a Richmond carpenter and joiner. Buker instructed by building committee to model the church design after the Gardiner Universalist Church of 1842.

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Cost \$1,800 with \$30 extra for matched boarding on facade and belfry. Town clock and bell placed in the tower in 1846. Original tall spire constructed by the Richmond builder Artemus Claflin (1808-1849) in 1847.

4. Alterations and additions: Between 1903 and 1905, the church experienced some major alterations. On the exterior, the original spire was removed on June 2, 1905, because of decaying timber and was replaced by a shorter one. Balustrades and pinnacles were taken off the two stages of the tower. On the interior, original pews were removed and replaced by the present ones. An extension was built on the northwest corner of the church in which to locate the pipe organ. A new altar rail was hand-turned and set up by the minister, the Rev. Royal A. Rich. The ceiling and walls were covered with tin sheathing. The remodelling cost \$2,300. The church was reopened on October 2, 1905. Two subsequent additions are elaborate stained glass windows, one placed in 1919 in memory of James and Silas Haynes and the other installed in 1928 to commemorate Daniel Holway and his family.
5. Important old views: Lithographic view appearing on Map of the Town of Richmond, Sagadahoc Co., Maine from actual survey by D. S. Osborn, Civil Engineer, Published by E. M. Woodford, Philadelphia, 1855. Map in possession of Mrs. Paul Roberts, 32 Pleasant St., Richmond, Maine 04357. Photograph looking from head of White Street taken in spring of 1890 by A. B. Houdlette. Photograph in possession of Mrs. Earl Cronk, 55 Main St., Richmond, Maine 04357.

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

The Methodists and Congregationalists of the Richmond area united in 1846 to form a parish called the Richmond Village Chapel Society. The church was built in 1846-47 and occupied by the two denominations on alternate Sundays for ten years. In 1857 the Methodists purchased the Congregationalists' share, thus becoming the sole owners. Recently Methodists from the adjoining town of Dresden combined with the Richmond society to form the present Richmond-Dresden Union Methodist Church.

C. Supplemental Material: None.

D. Sources of Information:

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1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Notes concerning Richmond history in possession of Mrs. Paul Roberts, 32 Pleasant Street, Richmond, Maine 04357.

Sagadahoc County Registry of Deeds, Sagadahoc County Courthouse, High Street, Bath, Maine 04530.

Typescript history of the Richmond Methodist Church in possession of Mrs. Earl Cronk, 55 Main Street, Richmond, Maine 04357.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Fleming, John Daly (ed.). Richmond on the Kennebec. Lewiston: Twin City Printery, 1966.

History and Church Directory of the First Methodist Episcopal Church. Richmond: 1932.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The Richmond-Dresden Union Methodist Church, designed in 1846, is a typical wooden village or rural church of the first half of the nineteenth century. It is approximately rectangular, has a gable roof with the gable facing front, and features a two-tiered steeple and spire on the peak of the gable roof at the front. The exterior is ornamented with fine vernacular Gothic Revival detail.
2. Condition of fabric: Altered, well-maintained.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: 38'-8" x 56'-8", approximately rectangular, story-and-a-half, two-bay facade.
2. Foundations: Concrete.
3. Wall construction: Facade (east side) and tower, white matched boarding; side and rear walls, white clapboarding.

4. Framing: Standard light frame construction with wooden studs, joists and rafters.
5. Porches, stoops, bulkheads: A wooden landing with railings and two steps in front of each of the two doorways (east side).
6. Chimneys: One brick chimney at rear of organ extension on northwest corner of church.
7. Openings:
- a. Doorways and doors: Two doorways on the facade (east side). Each has a double door and a double pointed arch window above it. The individual doors are comprised of five horizontal rectangular panels. Each double door and window are surrounded by thick wooden moldings which rise around them to form a large pointed arch.
  - b. Windows and shutters: Double pointed arch windows over each of the two doorways (east side). Triple pointed arch window in center of triangular pediment of the facade (east side). Two long triple pointed arch windows on either side (north and south) of the church. No shutters.
8. Roof:
- a. Shape, covering: Gable roof, ridge running east-west. Covering of asphalt shingles.
  - b. Cornice, eaves: Boxed cornices, eaves slightly overhang first-floor walls.
  - c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: Tower at front (east side) astride gable roof, has two tiers with steeple at top, first tier has clock on all four sides, second tier is belfry with open design on all four sides of a double pointed arch encompassed by a large one. Above belfry rises short steeple with weathervane.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. Basement: Full basement extends under the church.

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- b. First floor: Rectangular vestibule in front of church with two doorways leading into large, open sanctuary.
  - c. Attic: Large, open rectangular space with exposed framing of sanctuary ceiling and gable roof. Flooring only in the front of the attic.
2. Stairways: Basement stairway in the southeast corner of the vestibule. Attic stairway to its right.
  3. Flooring: Narrow wooden strips, varnished.
  4. Wall and ceiling finish: Pressed tin sheathing, pattern of squares for wainscoting, large rectangular pattern for walls, sanctuary ceiling in pattern of squares with a large square in the center and a diamond within it from which the central electrical fixture hangs.
  5. Doorways and doors: Two doors which provide passage from vestibule to sanctuary, each surrounded by Greek Revival molding which uses two corner blocks. Door at northwest corner provides passage from sanctuary to parish house.
  6. Decorative features and trim: Ornamental woodwork around the organ, especially the central section with gable decorated by recessed quatrefoil and carved fleur-de-lis; wooden chancel rail comprising a series of pointed arches; four large sanctuary windows, first one on either side is of frosted glass in a diamond shape, the south one featuring a stained glass cross at the top and the north one, a stained glass Bible in the same location, second one on either side is an elaborate stained glass memorial window with a design dominated by geometric pattern and flowers.
  7. Notable hardware: None.
  8. Lighting: Electrical fixtures.
  9. Heating: Oil-fired steam with system of radiators.
- D. Site:
1. General setting and orientation: Church is sited on a flat lot and faces east toward Pleasant Street in a mixed residential and commercial area adjacent to Main Street in Richmond.

2. Enclosures: None.
3. Outbuildings: Parish house of 1885 connected to the church at the northwest corner.
4. Walks: Central cement walk leading from the sidewalk to between the steps and landing in front (east) of each of the two facade entrances.
5. Landscaping: Grass lawn in front (east) of the church.

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Prepared by Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.  
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